

20

DISCOURSE

ON

THE ASPECTS OF THE WAR,

DELIVERED IN

The Indiana-Place Chapel, Boston,

ON

FAST DAY, APRIL 2, 1863.

BY JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

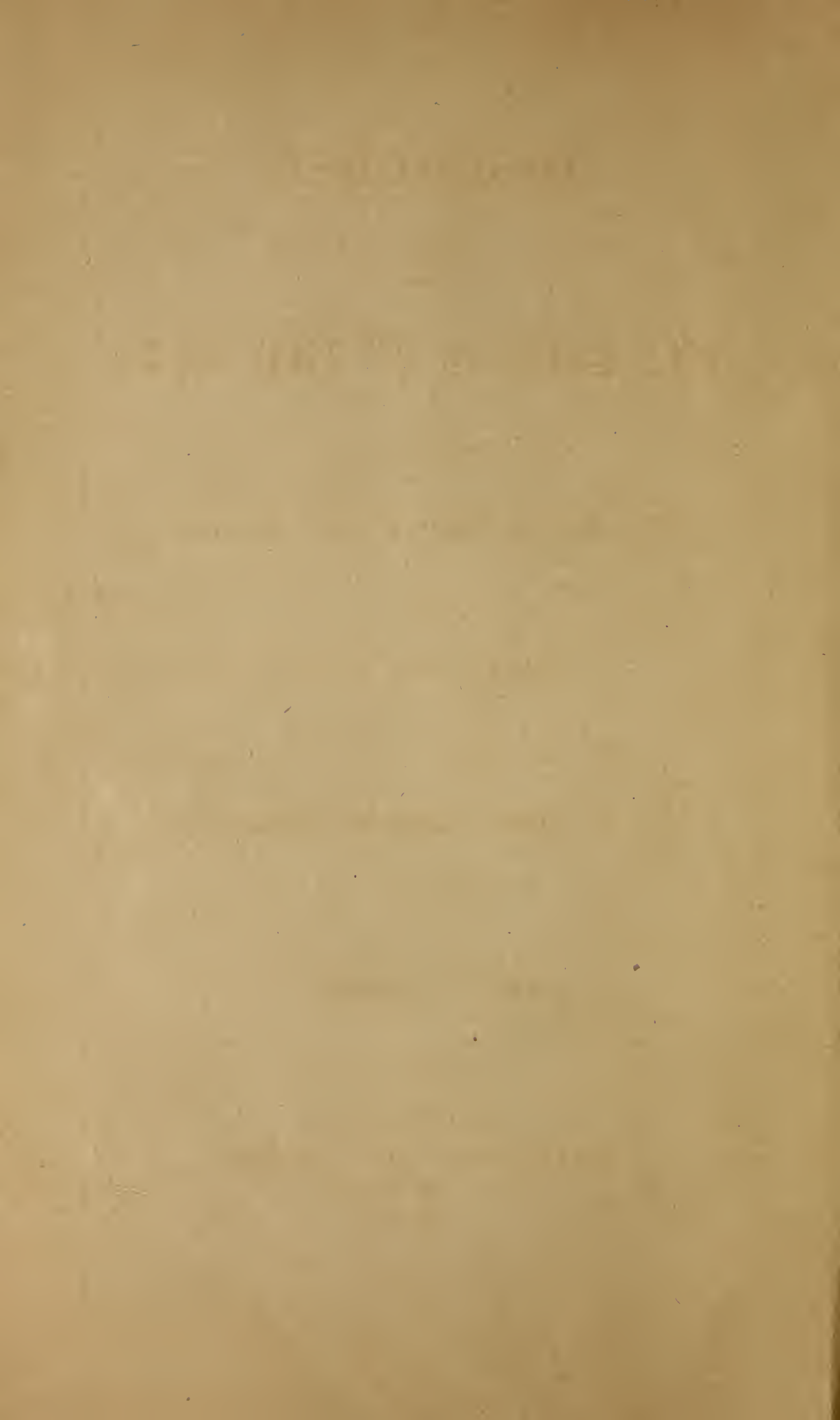
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ERRATA.

Page 18, line 17, for "secure," read "remove."

Page 26, line 8, *dele* the word "almost."

DISCOURSE.

Jer. vi. 14: "THEY HAVE HEALED THE HURT OF THE DAUGHTER OF MY PEOPLE SLIGHTLY, SAYING, PEACE, PEACE, WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE."

Ezek. xiii. 10-15: "THEY HAVE SEDUCED MY PEOPLE, SAYING, PEACE, AND THERE WAS NO PEACE; AND ONE BUILT UP A WALL, AND—LO, OTHERS DAUBED IT WITH UNTEMPERED MORTAR! THEREFORE, THUS SAITH THE LORD: THERE SHALL BE AN OVERFLOWING SHOWER AND GREAT HAILSTONES AND A STORMY WIND; SO WILL I BREAK DOWN THE WALL, AND BRING IT TO THE GROUND, THAT THE FOUNDATION MAY BE DISCOVERED. SO WILL I ACCOMPLISH MY WRATH UPON THE WALL, AND ON THOSE WHO HAVE DAUBED IT WITH UNTEMPERED MORTAR; THAT IS, THE PROPHETS WHO SEE VISIONS OF PEACE WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE."

WE live in a great historic period. What we call history occupies but a small part of the centuries of time, or of the existence of the human race. Nations, civilized and uncivilized, have ten years or fifty years of annals to one year of history. Lists of kings, wars of robbery, the records of luxury, wealth, and outward well-being, do not make history — they only make annals. It is with nations as with plants, or with men — long periods of growth alternate with short hours of blossom-bearing and fruit-bearing — months of development with days of crisis.

During the long months of spring, mid storms and sunshine, the buds slowly swell on the trees; gently they unfold their little leaves, and shake them out

timidly upon the harsh, inhospitable air; then as the spring melts towards summer, the blossom-buds expand, till one morning we rise, and lo! summer has come. The apple-trees are all white with their snowy blossoms — the air is fragrant with their delicate perfume. We have reached a crisis of concentrated life. Then, after a few days, the blossoms are gone — the fruit begins to swell slowly through other long months of silent growth — at last comes another crisis, — yesterday we tasted the fruit and it was sour — today the sun, before we were up, gave the last mysterious touch with his magnetic rays, and the juices are now sweet, — and the children this afternoon may climb the trees to gather the apples, their rosy cheeks shining by the side of the rosy fruit — a picture for Teniers. Here is another crisis — the days of blossom and of ripe fruit are the history of the apple-tree, — all the rest only its annals.

Or, look at your own life! How small a part of it is history — how large a part of it only story. Outward events, with no informing idea, no corresponding inward crisis. There was a day, — you remember it well, — when you asked yourself the question, — What am I? What am I here for? Who sent me? What can I do with myself in the world? On that day you came to self-consciousness. It was a crisis in your life. Your history began on that day. Before that day you existed; after that day you lived. You became a free being at that

time, — assuming self-direction, self-restraint, self-control. Before, you had floated on the current, or drifted with the tide; now you hoist the sail, take the helm, look at the compass, and set sail, beneath the dewy stars and the recurring sunrise, over the violet ocean to some far-off island of the blest, some divine distant home.

There was another day of crisis, when you knew what it was to love. You found yourself caring more for another than for yourself, — going out of your own life into that of another, finding a divine joy in adoring the beauty of another, following her with your thought, and feeding your life daily out of hers. This also was history. Those days may have long passed by. Perhaps you are a gray-headed man, known on change as a hard and keen man of business; no mortal suspects you of such a thing as sentiment. And yet, I will venture to say, there is somewhere among your papers, in some locked drawer of your bureau, a little faded packet of notes, with a withered flower which you cannot bear to throw away, — for it marks that critical period when you were all alive with an idea — when you were rapt away out of yourself into a seventh heaven. You were foolish as you could be, no doubt, — but — well, *It was life*; and you can never forget it.

So nations have long periods of annals, brief periods of history. The history of a nation is the time when it is filled with an idea, and when its life

proceeds, self-directed, from that, and not from the instinct which seeks mere material pleasure, comfort, luxury. When a nation is inspired by the idea of patriotism, or of religion, or of freedom, it makes history fast. When it subsides from these ideas into a routine of mere growth, it only makes annals. Wars, waged for an idea, even a false one,—like those of Alexander to carry Hellenic civilization into Asia; or the Crusades to carry the cross back to Palestine, and plant it above the crescent on the walls of Jerusalem, and the tomb of Jesus; or the Reformation and its wars; or the religious movements which have stirred the life of a people—the Revival of Thought in such ages as that of Elizabeth of England, Louis XIV., or the constellation of genius surrounding the Duke of Saxe Weimar in his little court; or great struggles for independence and freedom, as in the days of the English Commonwealth, or the American and French Revolutions; these days, when a nation is warmed through and through by the enthusiasm of an idea,—these days make its history.

And now we, in America, have suddenly come upon such a period, and we all feel ourselves lifted a little above ourselves, by its power. As, when the tide rises in your harbor, it lifts, not only the great man-of-war and the steamship, but also every little skiff and the child's paper boat; so, when an idea sweeps through a nation, all people, good and bad, wise and foolish, old and young, great and narrow,

for a time, at least, partake of it. All drink of the same spirit. When the news came to us, flashed along a hundred electric wires, of the attack on Fort Sumter, every man, woman, and child in the country, felt the thrill of patriotism. Many a man was astonished at himself, and said, "I did not know I had any patriotism. I did not know that I cared anything for the old flag. I did not know I felt so about the Union. Thank God, that I can care so much for anything."

This is something to be thankful for, — that we live in such a great historic time ; that we have seen a phenomenon which occurs not more than once in five hundred years, — the "uprising of a great people ;" and that we ourselves have partaken of this wonderful impulse. This has been to the nation what the Day of Pentecost was to the Christian Church, an outpouring of a spirit, which for the time dissolved all parties, reconciled all antagonisms, and made all men speak and hear the same language, — Parthians, Medes, Elamites, dwellers in Mesopotamia, Republicans, Democrats, old-fashioned Whigs, Pro-slavery men and Anti-slavery, Tariff and Free-trade, — all, for a time, spoke one language, heard the same words. That, also, is something to have seen ! People go from America to Rome to see the ceremonies of this week, in which the events of the Lord's Passion are celebrated with all the pompous ritual of the Catholic Church. It is impressive to see the great

floor of St. Peters covered with a standing congregation of fifty thousand persons witnessing the celebration of mass; or to see twelve thousand soldiers in the great square kneel at once on the pavement to receive the papal blessing. But what is that to the sight we have seen here, of a whole nation kneeling and giving itself up, its wealth, its liberty, the lives of its children, before the commanding presence of an idea — the idea of “Our Country.” And as that heavenly effusion of the spirit produced in the church corresponding fruits, so it has been with us. What have we not lived to see of devoted action?

We have seen, first of all, young men, our sons, the ripe fruit of the best culture of the best race of mankind going cheerfully forth, animated by a sense of duty, to live or to die in this cause. Not merely those who went as officers, but the privates of our army have shared fully this spirit. No doubt there are exceptions, but the spirit of the nation has been one of unexampled devotion. Europe never knew anything like it, and refused to believe it. The South could not believe it. It had looked on us as a race of cowards; and it had some reason to think so, since we had, in past time, compromised and conceded, one by one, nearly all the principles of manly independence. If we had resisted the aggressions of the South twenty years ago, we should not have been obliged to resist now. But the South expected no war, no resistance of any consequence, and bitter has

been its disappointment. The old blood of the land has shown itself as rich as ever in all heroic effort and sacrifice. No need, hereafter, for orators to go to Greece or Rome, to Marathon or Plataea, to find examples of grand heroism and martyrdom with which to round their classic periods. Go to Baltimore, and the passage of the Sixth Massachusetts through that mob-accursed city. Go to Ball's Bluff, and the Massachusetts Fifteenth and Twentieth standing, hour after hour, to be shot down because some one had blundered.

"Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs but to do and die."

Go to Hilton Head, and the magnificent exploit of our fleet sailing steadily round and round its calm curve of victory, till it had beaten to atoms the rebel batteries. Go to the Mississippi, and the passing of the forts and capture of New Orleans, and the Varuna going down, firing her deck guns, till they touched the water, and sinking a hostile vessel while she was sinking herself. Go to Hampton Roads, and that memorable day which abolished in a moment the wooden fleet of England and France, and see the Cumberland going down with its flag flying, and firing its batteries to the last. And what shall I say more, for the time would fail me to tell of all the noble deeds of our young heroes, down to this last splendid cavalry charge at Kelley's Ford.

Some twenty years ago, a physician who visited the Massachusetts General Hospital, used to take with him his little boy, three or four years old. A lady, whose husband was at the head of the establishment, endeavored to make the little fellow feel at home by trying to amuse him. But he was very timid and diffident; so much so, that when she brought a rocking-horse for him, he was afraid to sit on it, and would not ride on it unless held upon the horse by the lady. That boy was one of the leaders in the recent cavalry charge and combat — said to have been the finest ever made on the continent. That boy, twenty years ago, afraid to sit on a rocking-horse, dashed at full speed into the hostile squadrons, and when surrounded by superior numbers, defended himself gallantly till his horse was shot, and then refused to surrender. Our Boston boys have not lost the spirit of their fathers. Wealth has not made them effeminately self-indulgent, study and mental culture has not made them incapable of energetic action.

And the mothers of these young men, — I go to the house of one whose noble child has been struck down in battle. I go in fear, expecting to meet too much anguish, and almost too great a call on my sympathy. I find her happy, calm, thankful to God that he has given her such an opportunity of sacrifice for the land. This is the usual state of mind of the mothers of our young soldiers. There

is nothing of false excitement about it; it is the natural state of mind of those who have conscientiously and devotedly offered to God, to Truth, to Humanity, their best beloved child. They gave and it is given to them again, full measure, pressed down and running over. They gave a son; they receive back from God a saint and a hero.

Then look at the spirit of generosity and devotion which this war has called out at home. Look at the voluntary contributions, which seem to be more free and generous the longer the war goes on. I have had occasion, in my time, to collect money for various purposes; and I never saw anything so easy as to obtain money now. When I went to beg, formerly, I generally prepared myself beforehand to hear *no* three times to every *yes*, and to have people look at me, as though I were begging for myself. Now, on the other hand, I have *yes* said to me three times for one *no*. And, indeed, they sometimes beg of me to come. Only last week I was getting some contributions for the freed negroes in the South-west, who are in great want, and suffering for clothes and provisions now; and I was asked to come to one business place, and each of the partners handed me, without a word, fifty dollars, so that I went away with a generous contribution to the fund given at that one place without my asking for it. People get into a habit of giving, and it becomes easy.

One of the most striking aspects of the war is, that it comes as a JUDGMENT, and is full of God's judgments. It is not well, I know, to interpret the ways of God very freely, or rashly to call suffering judgment. The whole book of Job is a warning against that. Job's friends came to him in his woe, and said to him that his sufferings were judgments on him for his sins, and that he ought accordingly to repent of his sins. He replied that he did not see *how* he had sinned, so as to deserve these judgments more than other people. They said "He *must* have sinned in some terrible way, because he suffered so terribly." But they were told in the end that they were wrong and that Job was right. His sufferings were not judgments, but trial and discipline. So, too, Jesus rebukes the tendency to call suffering judgment, when his disciples wished to know about the man born blind: "Did this man sin, or his parents?" When, then, *may* we say that God has sent judgments? I think we may do so when we see that there is a law of God at work, by which a man has sowed sin and reaped punishment; that a nation has sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. Judgments make the necessary connection between sin and its consequences; long deferred, perhaps, but sure to come at last, and when they come, involving often the innocent with the guilty, visiting the sins of the parents upon the children, to the third and fourth generation.

In the Bible we see a great many judgments on the

Israelites and on the Egyptians, on David and on Pharaoh. But though these are represented as direct and immediate acts of God, it does not follow that they did not come also by divine laws. God's acts are never arbitrary. In the Bible we see the law on its supernatural side, in its sense, and in its meaning. The Bible merely shows the inner side and spiritual side of natural laws. The Bible, therefore, is like a watch with a transparent face, in which we can see the inner movements, and main-spring which turns the hands.

Now in this war we may see a divine judgment, because it is evil working out its natural results. We, as a nation, established ourselves on the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and declared that "all men were born equal, and endowed with an inalienable right to life and liberty." Meantime we held slaves, and took no measures, as a nation, to abolish slavery. Here was war already; a latent war, indeed, but none the less real; war between the national idea and the national conduct; between the national institution, on the one side, and the national convictions on the other. Now, in such a war, one of two things must come,—the institution must give way to the convictions, or the convictions to the institution. Failing this, the inner war *must* at last terminate in an outward struggle, in outward war. God's judgments are in bringing to light the things of darkness, and

making manifest the man of sin hidden away in the secret consciousness.

Judgment brings evil to light, and, by bringing it to light, prepares the way for repentance and reformation. When the consequences of an evil principle appear, men are ready to see the wrong of it, and repent of it. And to repent is the first step in any effectual progress. The Apostle Paul, you will remember, says in one of his Epistles, that his readers must not suppose, even from his former letter, that the coming of Christ and his day of triumph was near. It cannot come, he adds, till the "Man of Sin" is revealed. This "Man of Sin" he describes as an evil principle of spiritual and ecclesiastical ambition, at that time latent in the church, — a secret poison. It must *come out*, he says, and be seen and understood and judged by the truth, and condemned and repented of before the day of Christ can come. Just so we needed this judgment to bring out and expose the inner conflict in this nation, between its principles and its institutions.

Therefore, for seventy years has been this inward war, this hidden conflict in the heart of the nation, between the idea of Liberty and Equality which make the nation's soul, and this outward institution from which the North and South got their gain, by which they were growing rich and richer day by day. We had seventy years given us by God, in any part of which we might have prevented this war by

removing its cause. But three generations have refused to do it. The Revolutionary fathers said, "We have done enough in gaining independence for the nation. Let our children put away slavery when they choose!" Their children of the next generation said, "Time enough by and by. Slavery is a very wrong and bad thing, we know, but by and by it will be easier to abolish it. By and by it can be done, or will come to an end of itself." The third generation arrived, and found slavery the source of great and growing wealth and power to the nation, and said, "No! we will not touch it." The South said, "Our fathers were mistaken when they said slavery was wrong. Slavery is not wrong; it is right. Call all our doctors of divinity, and let them prove it to be so out of the Bible. Call our ethnologists and anatomists, and let them prove it right from the negro's skull and shin-bone. Call our moralists and let them show that it is right, because it makes the slave happy." So at the call of the cotton lords, they came and did their work. And so the whole South was united and agreed not to abolish, but to maintain and extend slavery; and to secede from the Union, or at least threaten to secede, if they were not allowed to do it.

On the other hand, at the North the people also finding themselves growing prosperous and powerful by means of this institution, said, "Let it alone. It is nothing to us. Am I my brother's keeper? Why

exclude slavery from the territories? It cannot go there. They are too wet, or too dry, or too mountainous, or too much of a prairie. The laws of God exclude it. Why re-enact them? We are not responsible. We have nothing to do with it. Put down the abolitionists and freesoilers, and let us have *peace.*”

Peace, — peace, — which was no peace. “Daub the wall with untempered mortar, and make it *look* like a good wall. The frost below is sapping it, the stream beneath steadily undermining it; but when the cracks begin to appear, put on a little mortar, and make it *look* like a good wall. It will last our day — after us the deluge.” Such has been northern statesmanship for the last thirty years.

They tell this story of William Lloyd Garrison. He was riding, one day, several years ago, in the cars; somewhere in Western New York. A Southerner in the car was told that Garrison was present, and said, “I should like to talk with him.” So he said, “Mr. Garrison, I wonder how you can expect to succeed. Look at the facts. The more you preach abolition, the more it does not come. The slave power is much stronger now than it was when you began. You cannot unite the North against slavery, and you have united the South in its defence. See the facts. We have done every thing we wished to do. We have annexed Texas, bought up the democratic party at the North, silenced and defeated the whigs, got a pro-

slavery congress, a pro-slavery executive, a pro-slavery judiciary. These are the facts." Mr. Garrison. "Yes! but *one* fact you have omitted in your estimate." "What is that?" said the other. Garrison replied, "*The fact of the existence of God!*" The Southerner, with the frankness which often belongs to him, threw up his hands, and said, "Well, by heaven, we do sometimes forget that, I think."

Meantime the idea, the conviction on which the nation was founded, did not die. It was awake and at work. It could not be put down by mobs. It could not be argued down by doctors of divinity referring to the curse of Noah, and Paul's Epistle to Philemon.

It could not be destroyed by the compromises of false-hearted politicians, only eager for power, — who were ready to sell out their anti-slavery convictions to the highest bidder. The anti-slavery conviction of the country was deserted by its leaders, — it lost its great men; but it went on and on and on. This was "the irrepressible conflict."

People say that the anti-slavery men were the cause of this war. That is perfectly true, in a certain sense. If there had been no anti-slavery, there would have been no war. The war could have been prevented in two ways: One way might have been by resisting the increase of slavery, — shutting it out of new States; throwing the whole influence of the Federal Government against it; and so, by degrees,

killing it out. If that had been done, there would have been no war.

Or, on the other hand, if the northern people, listening to the temptations of wealth, and the instructions of pro-slavery ministers, had given up all belief in human freedom, had expunged the preamble of the Declaration of Independence, and allowed slavery to extend itself where it would, — into Massachusetts, or anywhere else; there would have been no war. In this sense, therefore, anti-slavery was the cause of the war.

But here was the question you will observe. Here were two hostile and irreconcilable elements in the life of the nation, — an institution and a conviction, — the institution of slavery, and the conviction of freedom. One or the other must be put down, or war would come. Now which was the easiest to secure? The mistake our great men made was to think that it would be easier to crush a conviction than abolish an institution. That was a mistake; and I attribute the present war to the men who made that mistake, who thought that they could more easily destroy an idea in the soul of man, than abolish the institution of slavery. In 1850, under the lead of Daniel Webster, the great men of the land, after much hesitation, and after trying to be on both sides, finally saw that they must choose. They saw the approaching danger of war. They saw dissolution of the Union approaching. So they finally decided,

though reluctantly, that it would be more easy to uproot the conviction of liberty than the institution of slavery; and they set themselves deliberately to work, to induce the North to “conquer its prejudices.”

At first it seemed almost as if they were right. There was an alliance between the two great parties to put down all anti-slavery discussion in church and state. A minister who spoke against slavery was to be turned out of his pulpit; no rising, ambitious politician was to be encouraged, who was not willing to be quiet. For a time the compromises seemed all well. The wall, daubed with untempered mortar, seemed a very good, solid wall. They merely forgot one thing, — “*the fact of the existence of God.*”

God is more on the side of his ideas than of our institutions. When he sends an idea into the world he stands by it. It would have been a hard piece of work, no doubt, to have uprooted slavery, however gradually. But if our great men had decided to do so, in a wise but thoroughly earnest way, it could have been done. But what they tried to do, — to put down the conviction of freedom in the human soul, *could not be done*; and hence this war is a judgment of God, — first, on slavery, which it smites with the thunderbolt of battle; second, on slaveholders, whose pernicious sophisms and refuges of lies it will destroy forever; and thirdly, on all northern time-servers, self-seekers, and false teachers of morality, who smote Christ in the house of his friends,

and tried to persuade the nation that gain was godliness.

I think that God, in his providence, is now teaching us a great many things; but among the rest, especially this, — to repent of our treatment of the African. We have hated him because we have injured him. He belongs to an affectionate and inoffensive race; and I know of no other way to account for the hatred borne to him by so many, except that reason which the sagacious Roman historian assigned as a trait of human nature.

And this hatred of the negro leads me to say something of another aspect of the war; namely, the development of evil. It has brought out latent good, but latent evil also. Now I will say something of the last.

Great historic hours, like the present, are also, in this way, a day of judgment to communities and nations. As the poet truly says: —

“Some great cause, God’s new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, parts the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever, ’twixt that darkness and the light.”

This war, which has developed the noblest qualities in some, has also developed the basest in others. I do not know anything more mean and diabolical than this — when there is a prejudice against any poor and weak class, to make it one’s business to exasperate and increase it — when a race is trampled

upon, to set one's heel upon it more heavily — when a people are poor and weak, and find it hard to get a living by honest industry, in the face of a bitter prejudice, to make it harder, by circulating, greedily, all rumors against them, true or false. Now this unmitigated meanness, this consummate baseness is the systematic and persistent course of some of our newspapers. They think thus to please the poor Irish, I suppose, but I think that the Irish have a vein of generosity in them which will, sooner or later, make them despise such baseness. I do not know anything but a bad Yankee that is at once mean enough and cunning enough to do such things. The best thing, when corrupt, becomes the worst. “The sweetest wine,” says the Italian proverb, “makes the sourest vinegar.”* So the Yankee, also, when good and true, is the noblest of characters; when he is bad, the meanest. And among mean Yankees the meanest of all is a pro-slavery Yankee, whether he be editor of a newspaper, a south-side doctor of divinity, an episcopal bishop, or a president of a New-Hampshire college.

There always will be croakers, and they are very useful people. God not only has made the birds who welcome the coming day, in the soft auroral twilight, with a multitudinous chant of joy, — but he has also made the frogs who croak their sad com-

* “Il piu dolce vino fa il piu forte aceto.”

plaints over the damp, departing night. It always has been so. People have croaked over every great advance of the human race. They croaked at the invention of printing—it took the bread out of the mouths of the copyists; at the Reformation of Luther—it opened the way to a deluge of changes; at the downfall of Paganism, so many respectable augurs and haruspices were relieved of duty; at the progress of Christianity—so few respectable people approved of it,—“not many wise or noble” being called. There are croakers now, also, who lament over the downfall of slavery, as though it were the very keystone of the State. One of these croaking gentlemen made a speech, the other day, in the Massachusetts Senate, in which, searching for the cause of the war, he found that in 1831, John Quincy Adams introduced several petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and our Massachusetts wise man says, “this act exasperated the South.” Also he finds that in 1851, a coalition of democrats and freesoilers chose Charles Sumner to the Senate, and George S. Boutwell as governor; “and to this act, directly and indirectly,” he adds, “and to these two gentlemen, more than to any other northern men is to be traced the present awful and deplorable condition of the country. It was they,” he adds, “who succeeded in goading the South to open rebellion.” The South was exasperated, and it seems justly, because we civilly asked that human slavery

might not exist in our own National Capitol. We ought not to have made them angry. It was very wicked of the lamb to make the wolf angry, by drinking in the stream so near to him. It was very wicked in Elijah the prophet to trouble Israel, and exasperate King Ahab by rebuking his sin. It was very wrong in Jeremiah to exasperate King Zedekiah and the princes by not prophesying smooth things, and to make them wroth with him, so that they smote him and put him in prison. It was wrong in Naboth to exasperate Jezebel by refusing to give up his vineyard, and he was responsible for Jezebel's conduct in killing him. So, in the same way, it was wrong for Massachusetts to exasperate South Carolina by sending Mr. Hoar to give legal protection to Massachusetts citizens, and to exasperate the chivalric sons of Mississippi by not asking their leave before we elected Charles Sumner and Governor Boutwell. Thus croak a few frogs still in the damp places of the land. But that sort of croaking is a safety-valve to let out the pressure of their dissatisfaction. I look upon the Boston Courier as a kind of marsh which has been providentially provided for these people, where they can sit and croak to each other in a sort of frog concert of mutual condolence — and if it makes them happy, why not?

There is, however, a different class of men, and a much more dangerous class, who mean to carry practical opposition to the Government as far as they

dare. They mean to give aid and comfort to the rebels, so far as they can do it, *salvâ cervice*, without too great elongation of their own necks. To this class belongs Mr. Salisbury, in the Senate of the United States, who calls Lincoln an imbecile, and draws a pistol on the sergent-at-arms. To this class belong Seymour and Fernando Wood and James Brooks, in New York, and Vallandigham and others in other States. But all history shows that when, in time of war, men attack the Government in this way, they will lose their influence. The best men of their own party will refuse to follow them. Those men in England who opposed the war against Napoleon, though they were patriots, yet because they opposed the Government in time of war, fell into hopeless minority. Those men in Massachusetts, who opposed the war of 1812, were politically killed from that hour. The instincts of the two nations said, "Whether the Government be right or wrong, *it is at war, and we must support it*. Else anarchy—else national ruin." It will always be so. All factious opposition to our Government in time of war will destroy itself. No harm will come to the nation from the efforts of unprincipled editors and politicians. I am glad they come out as they do. All loyal, honest democrats will spurn them with contempt—as Dickinson spurns them, as Wright spurns them, as Henderson and Noel of Missouri spurn them, as

Robert Dale Owen and Orestes Brownson spurn them, and as Benjamin F. Butler spurns them.

But what is the prospect of success in this war? Read Stillé's pamphlet, and see. Stillé, in his pamphlet, called "How a Free People conduct a long War," has shown us, by the light of history, how we are to succeed. England, in the Peninsula war, began with a universal enthusiasm like ours in April, 1861. All parties united in voting large supplies, all parties expected overwhelming victories. But when Sir John Moore retreated to Corunna, and the French overran the Peninsula, the English gave up hope, and fell into an extreme of despondency. Still they persevered. When Wellington failed to take the French armies, they desponded again. But they *persevered*. And so at last, the French were driven from Spain, and defeated everywhere, not by great victories, but by the force of *perseverance*, which inspires a free people.

How much we have done! It is true that we have not found a Napoleon yet for a general; nor a General Jackson, to put an iron will into the Executive Department. But a Napoleon is, fortunately, as rare as a Shakspeare. A great captain, like Hannibal or Cæsar or Frederick or Napoleon, comes only once in five hundred or a thousand years. We had no right to expect any such. Well for us that none such has come. We have had able and loyal captains, but no great

military genius, who could, in all likelihood, have destroyed our republic and made himself its despot. Nations may well say of such :—

“Curse on his genius — it’s undone his country.”

But meantime, without any splendid victories, we have been steadily advancing. We have done what no other nation on earth could have done. We have girdled the rebellion with an almost effective blockade of three thousand miles extent. We have held every loyal State exempt from being the seat of war. We have taken, with an iron grasp, four slave States, Missouri, Maryland, Delaware, and Kentucky. We have taken half of Virginia and made a free State of it. We have emancipated the District of Columbia, and so killed disloyalty therein. We have occupied a large part of Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida, with our troops. We have nearly opened the Mississippi river. Finally, we have struck the rebellion the most damaging blow of all, and shaken the ground under its feet, by freeing so many of the slaves, and by threatening the whole slave system. Soon we shall have large bodies of negro troops organized on the lower Mississippi, to keep that which our armies and gunboats conquer. Soon we shall be holding Texas as a State to be colonized with free labor, and restored to the Union a free State, capable of raising

cotton enough for the whole world. Soon we shall have Missouri as a free State, slavery not being cut down by the sword of war, but taken up by the roots, by the free act of its own citizens. I am radical enough to prefer to see it thus taken up by the roots. When this is done, Maryland must follow, and Kentucky must follow Maryland, and we shall hope to see a great central tier of free States, voted free by the people themselves. In all these States the negroes will be hired by their old masters, and occupy their old homes, and demonstrate, after a little time, the inherent superiority of freedom over slavery. In twenty years after slavery is gone, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia will blossom like the rose, and be the garden of the American continent, as well as the keystone of the American Union.

Meantime, while we have been thus crushing the rebellion with our right hand, we have been holding England and France still with our left hand. The difficulties of our position were very great, and it required consummate prudence, joined to a great display of force, to prevent interference. We need not be surprised at the hostility of England toward us which culminated in the Trent affair, but which has since been growing less and less, till now England may be said to be really on our side. Three great influences impelled England to desire the dissolution of the Union. First was the influence of the aristocracy,

including not only the nobility, but the army, navy, church, gentry, the educated, the rich, and the literary classes. The success of the American republic has been, for thirty years, the great argument used by English reformers against the English aristocracy. The dissolution of the American republic would destroy that argument, and give the aristocracy a lease of a hundred more years of life. "See," they could say, "a republic has no stability, because wanting in this aristocratic element. Keep *us*, and England is safe, not otherwise." Then came the manufacturers, who had committed England to the principle of free trade, and who needed markets for her goods. The dissolution of the Union would secure an open market at the South, and compel the North to reduce its tariff to the lowest terms. This motive was of immense weight. Finally, there was added the feeling in the heart of nearly every Englishman, that the Union was becoming a great and dangerous neighbor. They had been obliged to bear from us what they would not have borne from any other people, to concede to us what they would not have conceded to any other. This concession and endurance rankled in the English bosom. They felt as you would feel if you had a family for neighbors who were noisy, who came through your yard, overlooked your windows, and threatened the peace of your melon-patch. If you should hear, some day, that this family had quarrelled among themselves, and would probably be

divided and scattered, you would be glad of it. You would say, "Now, I shall have peace, and it will be better for them to be broken up; they will cease to be a nuisance, and will become more respectable." These three influences ruled the action of England. But the other nation (as Count Gasparin calls it), in England, which is not an aristocracy, which is sincerely anti-slavery, which is humble, and voiceless, — the plebeian multitude, honest, strong, determined, — has always been on our side. Starving, without bread, in deepest want, it has clung to the northern cause, as the cause of justice and true democracy; and now it begins, more and more to be felt in all the counsels of England, and I think England will not act against us in this war.

But the principal thought which forces itself upon the mind, is, *that God is in this war*. We cannot keep out of sight the Divine Providence, which is sure to punish evil — sure to put down the proud and raise the lowly — which judges nations, as men, by fixed and inevitable laws. For the sake of our prosperity, our union, and our peace, we consented, during long years, to what we ourselves knew perfectly was unjust and wrong. What was the natural consequence? The South came to believe that we cared for nothing but money. As long as we were willing to concede, again and again, principle, honor, conviction, for the sake of union, peace, and prosperity, they

believed, and with good reason, that for the sake of peace, prosperity, and union, we would concede every thing. If we had resisted at the first, we should never have come to this.

But the great Power which presides over the world meant that we should do justice. He cares for all His children. There is with Him neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, neither black nor white. So, refusing to do anything for the slave; refusing to let the people go out of bondage; plague upon plague has come upon us, until, at last, we have reached the darkness of Egypt and the death of the first-born. And now, finally, we are driven to the point of emancipation, not because we wish to emancipate, but because we must. What we would not do for the sake of justice and humanity, we are compelled to do to save ourselves. We call on the negro, in our extremity, to save us. It will be a very strange illustration of the ways of God if the poor ignorant negro, trampled under foot of all, rises to the work of saving the American Union. "As a military necessity," says the president; "As a military necessity," says General Butler. "Don't think we do it, because it is right," we say to mankind — "do not so misunderstand us; we do it because we cannot help it." But it must be done. All men of any sagacity, no matter what were their previous opinions, are fast coming to agree on this point. It must be done. The re-

bellion is slavery—and if we fight the rebellion we must fight slavery. General Butler says the slaves are sure to be free. Wendell Phillips, as an abolitionist, says his work is done. When the children of this world and the children of light are so emphatically agreed, I think that all between the two extremes, will come to a like conclusion. General Butler took seven pro-slavery democratic colonels with him to New Orleans, and they are all in favor of emancipation. Such is the logic of facts.

The objections to negro soldiers are coming to an end very rapidly. The low motive of selfishness must help soon to accomplish this result. When it comes to drafting, and the question is whether we refuse to let negroes be soldiers, and so increase the chance of being drafted ourselves and having our sons drafted, I do not think there are many who will refuse to let them go. Col. Higginson, and Col. Montgomery, in South Carolina and Florida, have demonstrated that they make good soldiers. They take discipline well, are obedient, are imitative, have a great deal of the love of approbation, which is an important motive in war; and as to courage, courage in a soldier after he has been disciplined, is a matter of course. Then they know the South; are acquainted with the country; are used to labor and hardship; do not need half the equipage that white soldiers need, in marching; and are not exposed so much to the diseases of southern climates. If the war goes on I expect to

see armies of negroes, all of whom will acquire self-respect as United-States soldiers, and inspire respect in others. The wives and children will stay at their homes; the men will come and enlist; and this will be the best education for liberty — the best kind of transition from slavery to freedom.

People say, “what will you do with the negroes if you free them?” Providence answers the question — make soldiers of them. Give the negro the opportunity he needs. This is a part of the solution of the problem, and so we had better accept it. Another part of it is, to make Florida and Texas free States, and let the negro go there and work for wages; or work on land of his own, raising cotton by free labor. Free labor will supersede slave labor in a few years, if you give it this trial.

Another *aspect of the war* is its tendency to produce a deeper and truer union between the States and people. It is often the tendency of prosperity to divide, and of adversity to unite. Those who have gone together through great trials are likely to be thoroughly united; more so than those who have only enjoyed life in company. “Two young lovers lately wed,” think that they love each other as much as is possible. They know nothing about it. They do not know how much deeper and richer the love will be which will come one day, when they shall have borne together common sorrows, gone through labors together, endured hardships

and made sacrifices for each other, watched by each other through long hours of sickness and pain, and dropped tears into the same grave on the little casket which holds the darling of their hearts. So is it also with nations. When prosperity has divided a nation by developing different interests and antagonist activities, adversity unites it by common sacrifices and common struggles. Superficial thinkers imagine that our Union was made by the Constitution, and that those who made the Constitution made the Union. Superficial thinkers,—for what is a constitution but a piece of parchment, unless it expresses the wishes and intentions of the people? Nothing is easier than to make a good constitution,—nothing harder than to have it accepted and set in motion, unless the people are ready for it. The South-American States have had as good or better constitutions than ours; but their constitutions have not saved them from anarchy and civil war. The Revolutionary War made the people ready for the Federal Constitution, by making them really desire “a more perfect union.” Their common struggles and sufferings, side by side, through eight years of war; their common efforts to raise men and money; “the bones of New-England’s sons, fallen in the great struggle for independence, and mingled with the soil of every State, from Maine to Georgia,”—this was the real basis of the Federal Union. And now the same causes will produce the same results. Massachusetts

men, fighting side by side with the men of Pennsylvania, for the defence of Kentucky; men of Iowa and Wisconsin and Maine and Maryland, struggling for the possession of Richmond, or the opening of the Mississippi; New York and New England, rescuing the loyal men of Texas and Western Virginia with their own blood; comforts sent from Boston to the bedside of the sick soldier of Missouri, in the hospitals of Tennessee. These are the things to unite a nation. The Union between the loyal States is today stronger than it has ever been. Never was there less danger than there is today, of the West separating from the East, or of New England's being left out in the cold. The war, like a burning fire, has fused the convictions and sentiments of the nation together; it has made abolitionists by the logic of facts, of men, who, two years ago, were bitterly pro-slavery; it has made the semi-loyal loyal, or has driven them into open treason or rebellion. We may therefore say that the Union was never so strong as it is today.

And even as regards the rebel States, perhaps it will be found that this war will have a tendency to prepare them for union with us on a firmer foundation than in the years that are past. If it destroys slavery, it will destroy the only cause of disunion. Slavery abolished and the slaveholders converted to emancipation, they will become one with the North in feeling and conviction. The fact that

we have fought together will not necessarily divide us. The people of England were as much united after their civil war as before. Two boys at school, long jealous of each other, often like each other better after they have had a trial of strength. The North and South have learned to respect each other's courage and determination. We thought them braggarts — they thought us cowards. We have both found out that we were mistaken.

There is, then, no reason for discouragement. We can always fall back on first principles, and say, "The Lord reigns." It never was more evident than now that the Lord reigns. He had waited long enough for us to do justly, — he could wait no longer.

We have shown in this war the immense power of free institutions. We have improvised armies and extemporized navies. We have shown that a free and educated people need never have standing armies or great navies or forts; that when she needs them she can make them all at once. America sprang from the ground, at the sound of the cannon fired at Fort Sumter, an armed man. Her common schools, which send armies of industry into the field in time of peace, sent armies of soldiers when necessary to the war. We supplied all deficiencies of organization by the power of voluntary action.

Best of all, whatever else comes, emancipation has come. Whether the slaves are free or not, we our-

selves are free. No longer is slavery legal; no longer are we bound to maintain it. That disgrace has passed away forever. Those who have fallen in this struggle have not fallen in vain. Blessed be God for their heroic lives and noble deaths.

“Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims
Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told;
And hail once more the banner of battle unrolled,
Though many an eye shall darken, and many weep,
Yet God’s first claims shall be wreaked on a giant liar,
And many a darkness into light shall leap,
And the hearts of the people beat with one desire;
And noble thought be freer under the sun;
For the peace I deemed *no* peace, is over and done
In the blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.”

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